श्री भूपेंद्र सिंह मान : अगर आप मुझे इजाजत नहीं देते, तो मैं वाक-आउट ही कर सकता हूं, और क्या कर सकता हूं ।

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MR. CHAIRMAN: That is up to you, you may walk out but you cannot disturb.

(At this stage the hon. Member left the Chamber.).

...ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTION..

Cancellation of VIP chartered flights.

*21. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cancellation of VIP chartered flights are on the increase;

(b) the number of VIP flights cancelled at the last moment, during the last three years;

(c) whether it is a fact that aircraft alloted for the flights were Mumbai-based for routine maintenance ; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that the maintenance of this aircrafts at Mumbai have become a security menace?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) While no VIP chartered flight involving Air India aircraft has been cancelled during the last three years, there have been two instances in 1994 of VIP flights being delayed due to technical snags.

(c) For international flights of VVIPs, generally Air India's aircraft are utilised. Maintenance of these aircraft is carried out at the maintenance base of Air India at Bombay. For domestic VVIP flights; Boeing 737 aircraft of Indian Airforce are utilised. Maintenance of these aircraft are carried out at Delhi.

(d) No, Sir. As far as selection and maintenance of Air India aircraft for operation of extra section chartered VIP flights are concerned; Procedures have been laid down by the Government of India in which Government security agencies are also fully involved.

SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Sir, this is a very important quesion. Our VVIPs go abroad and before they go abroad the aircraft of Air India meant for them are sent to Mumbai for maintence. On one side of the hanger, where all these aircraft are maintained, there is a burial ground about 150 metres away from it. On the other side, about 100 metres away from the VVIP aircraft hangar, there is one Dargah. This is within the premises of the Airports Authority. As far as my knowledge goes, this is a restricted zone. When I tried to see the site, the concerned securiy officers asked me to show my own identity.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude your question. You are not going to deliver a story.

SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: No, no, Sir. I am not going to deliver a story.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please put your question.

SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Yes, Sir. What happens there, at both the places, is hundreds of people enter into the premises. These unauthorised people come inside at any time, offer prayers and go out. There is no identification. Nobody questions that. They enter into the premises and go out. I wont to know from the hon. Minister what type of security arrangements has been made there so rar to see that these aircraft are maintained properly. It should be protected because the distance from both the places is hardly 100 metres. I want to know from the hon. Minister this thing.

*Not recorded.

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: The supplementary seems to be a totally unrelated one. The question is regarding cancellation of VVIP flights I can understand about the maintenance of the aircraft. But it is totally unrelated to say that there is a burial ground. I don't think, after having buried, those people are in a position to cause any disruption to the maintenance of the aircraft.....

AN. HON. MEMBER: Their ghosts.

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: ... unless they become ghosts. It seems that it is totally unrelated.

SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Anybody can go to the aircraft very easily. If you are allowing any person to go nearby, about 100 metres or 150 metres near the hangar, he can reach the spot easily.

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: The point of "can reach" is out of question. If you give any specific instance that on such and such occasion, be cause of this an incident or accident has taken place, we will definiely take action. I don't see any reason why these two things are linked.

SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: To the first question he has replied that it is not necessary to take precaution on that count.

My second supplementary is that when VVIPs go abroad one standby aircraft is also kept reserved and both the aircraft are repaired accordingly. So, how much loss does take place during that period?

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Sir, we always keep one standby aircraft should anything go wrong at the last moment which we have experienced unfortunately while no loss a person than the hon. Vice-President was travelling. So, it is not the question of loss. It is the question of the prestige involved. I think the loss will be much more if you don't keep a stand-by aircraft. If anything goes wrong with the aircraft then we will have to call another aircraft or cancel the flight. I think to avoid that a stand by aircraft is kept I don't think it is not advisable. It is always advisable to keep a stand-by aircraft.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Sir, taking on from what Mr. Pradhan has mentioned, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Air India is thinking in terms of a VIP squadron... (*Interruptions*). I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any thinking on the part of the Air India to have a special VIP squadron for movement of VVIPs like the President, the Prime Minister or the Vice-President. That would entail no disruption of the normal schedule of the Air India. I would like to know whether there is any such thinking or not.

Coming back to the main question, Sir, there have been a lot of mishaps like the one in which, when the Prime Minister was abroad, the wind screen gave way. Once there was a tyre burst. Sir, there have been a few safety problems. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether to go into it any committee has been formed in Air India which would look after the flight safety For example, the Air Force has the La Fontaine Committee which went into all aspects of flight safety. Would the Minister tell us whether there is any such thinking on the part of the Ministry?

Sir, in the main question they have mentioned 'Mumbai'. There has been a long-standing demand to change 'Bombay' to 'Mumbai'. I would like to know from the Minister whether that demand has been acceded to by the Government or by the Rajya Sabha Secretariat only.

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Sir, as far as part (a) of the question of the hon. Member is concerned, it is a very pertinent question. In order to improve the existing arrangement and the chartering of aircraft for VIPs like the President, the Prime

Minister and the Vice-President, the Government of India has already constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of the Director-General Civil Aviation. It is being supported by the members from the Air India, the Indian Airlines, the Air Force, SPG and the PMO. It was formed in the month of May and the Committee submitted its report last month. The Government is examining this report. As far as the second part of the question is concerned, Sir, safety and security is drawing our attention, more so after the liberalisation policy because previously we had only Government owned airlines and now, we have as many as 17 airlines operating in the country. As far as the safety and security is concerned, it is of paramount importance for the Civil Aviation Ministry. So, keeping this in view, the Government of India has decided to constitute a one man Committee to carry out a comprehensive reappraisal of all the existing air safety regulations and machinery with a view to ensuring their effectiveness on a sustainable basis. This one-man Committee, of course, will be provided with all the facilities. The Committee will submit its report with regard to the Act, rules, maintenance of aircraft bird-hits and deficiencies in air safety within one year's time.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Mr. Minister, you have not replied about the disruption in the Air India schedule.

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: I have already replied.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, in view of the facts that there are complaints from the public about the interruption as regards the general flights and also because of the inconvenience experienced by the VVIPs themselves — Sir, you have had a recent experience of this — will the hon. Minister consider that all the arrangements as regard transportation of or the flights of the VVIPs are privatised subject to the safety and security norms that he may like to prescribe?

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: No, Sir.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: Sir, taking off from what Mr. Chaturvedi said, I would like to bring to the hon. Minister's notice that already at the State level, the flights of private airlines are being chartered by the VIPs there to fly and, consequently, there is an untoward disruption of the schedule in the flying of these private airlines. Sir, recently, at Madurai in Tamil Nadu, a flight of the NEPC airline was suddenly chartered by the Chief Minister's party and the entire passengers who were waiting at the airport... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: I strongly object to this... (interruptions) This aspect has been unnecessarily brought in... (interruptions) This happened so many days back... (interruptions) This has nothing to do with the question. Private airlines and VIP flights are different ... (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: Is the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister not a VIP? (*Interruptions*)

SHRI V. RAJAN CHELLAPPA: That is not relevant to the question... (Interruptions)

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: She is trying to bring in some other issue which is not relevant to the question. That was a private airline... (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: What do you mean? It is under the Civil Aviation.. (Interruptions)

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: One Cabinet Minister was humiliated... (Interruptions)

SHRI S. MUTHU MANI: Sir, it is not relevant... (Interruptions)

SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN: Sir, allow her to put her question ... (Interruptions)

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: She cannot jump into any issue...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let me hear the question... (Interruptions) Let me hear the question... (Interruptioss)

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: It is a question relating to Civil Aviation. Sir, all the passengers waiting at the Madras airport... (Interruptions) I did not know that "Tamil Nadu Chief Minister" is an unparliamentary word. I am saying that the private airlines... (Interruptions)

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: The flight was not arranged by the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister suddenly. It was a flight arranged for her about three weeks back. Unnecessarily stories are being circulated as if it was done immediately. It was not so.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: Sir, the passengers at the Madurai and Madras airports were starnded because suddenly the VIP chartered a private aircraft. Newspapers have written editorials about it. The passengers have said tales of how much they had to suffer because the airline cancelled its flight in the last minute without any notice to them. Not only that, a Union Minister was seriously insulted on that flight by the Chief Minister... (Interruptions)

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: Sir, you please give me time...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You put your question on the subject, Mrs. Natarajan.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: All right, Sir. I will only put my question. My question is: When the private airlines allow their flights to be chartered by the VIPs at the State-level suddenly, what guidelines will be laid down by the Minister to protect the passengers who have already booked their tickets so that they are not put to undue hardships? What are the rules and regulations in this regard?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think it is outside the purview of the question. The Minister need not answer... (Interruptions) It does not relate to the question... (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: Sir, it is a question of VIP flights.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will you please sit down? (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: Sir, I would like to convince you. If you don't allow me, then I will sit down.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is nothing to convince. It is not a relevant question... (Interruptions) It is not relevant to this question.

Now, let us talk about the commonman and not VIPs. I move on to the next question. Question No. 22.

*22. (*The Questioner (Shri Dilip Singh Judev) was absent.* For answer vide column infra).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Question No. 23.

गुजरात के ग्रामीण और आदिवासी क्षेत्रों में सड़क निर्माण संबंधी परियोजनायें

*23. **श्री अनन्तराय देवशंकर दवे :** क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) गुजरात में अब तक "जवाहर रोजगार योजना" के अन्तर्गत निर्माण की गई सड़कों की कुल लम्बाई कितनी है और इस संबंध में कितनी धनराशि खर्च की गई है ;

(ख) क्या सरकार गुजरात के ग्रामीण और आदिवासी क्षेत्रों में सड़क निर्माण संबंधी परियोजनाएं शुरू करने के लिए विश्व बैंक से सहायता प्राप्त करने का विचार रखती है और